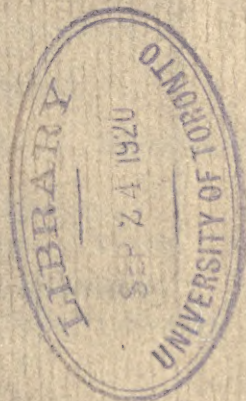


INTERIM REPORT  
ON  
THE JUVENILE COURT  
OF TORONTO

♦  
THE DETENTION HOME



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## LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

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To the Citizens of Toronto :

In connection with a study which is being made by the Citizens' Research Institute of Canada of Juvenile Court Work in Canada, the Bureau has been surveying, in some detail, the work of the Toronto Juvenile Court. The Bureau understands that some action is now contemplated in connection with the Detention Home for Juvenile Delinquents in Toronto and, therefore, feels that the facts obtained in this connection should be given to the citizens without delay.

A short summary of the work and organization of the Toronto Juvenile Court and the relation of the Detention Home thereto is presented herewith.

Respectfully submitted,

**BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH**

**JOSEPH E. HOWES,**  
Chief of Survey.

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Managing Director.

Toronto, September 1920.

## INTRODUCTION

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Juvenile Courts are a development of modern days. Their establishment has been based on the legal concept that the juvenile offender is the erring ward of the State, rather than a criminal foe of the social order. Community appreciation of Juvenile Court work has been based on the realization of several principles which are admirably stated by Edward F. Waite, District Judge of the Juvenile Court, Minneapolis, in his paper on "The Origin and Development of the Minnesota Juvenile Court", as follows:

1. The value of the child to the community;
2. The relative moral irresponsibility of juveniles;
3. The advantage of reformation over punishment as a social motive in dealing with offenders;
4. The effect of heredity and environment on character;
5. Community responsibility for conditions resulting in inherited and environmental handicaps.

Since the establishment of the first Juvenile Court in Chicago in 1899, Juvenile Courts have been set up in many of the large cities in Canada and the United States.



# THE JUVENILE COURT IN TORONTO

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## GENERAL.

Although Toronto was one of the first cities in the world to recognize the difference between juvenile and adult crime, inasmuch as it established the first Children's Court, the Juvenile Court, as such, was not organized until January, 1912. Although at first the work of the Court was handicapped by inadequate court-room accommodation, it has lately been placed in quite comfortable quarters in the basement of the new Land Registry Building. The organization of the Court as it stands at present is set out in Chart I.

## ORGANIZATION.

This organization, it will be seen, embraces practically all the features of an up-to-date Juvenile Court.

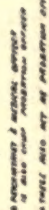
Through the effective work done by his assistants, who have been specially trained in various branches of the work, the Judge is enabled to get a very complete report on each case, from the physical, mental and social standpoints. The Psychiatrist and Medical Officer makes physical and mental examinations, the details of same being supplied to the Judge on printed forms. The nurse, social worker or probation officers make complete reports on home conditions for each case, when required, and these are also furnished to the Judge on printed forms. Frequently the teachers are consulted as to the school record of the child in the case. It will thus be seen that the Judge is enabled, from this very full information, to make an accurate diagnosis of each child's case before disposing of it.

It is to be regretted that excellent work of this nature is handicapped by the lack of a suitable detention home where cases could be placed for observation and the work of diagnosis completed, or where children could be committed for short periods of detention under proper correctional influences. Lack of such a Detention Home places the chief executive of the Court in the position of a physician who is aware of the malady affecting the patient, but is denied one of the factors necessary to effect a cure.

## THE PRESENT DETENTION HOME.

The Detention Home at present in use is located at 226 Simcoe Street, and was under the jurisdiction of the Children's Aid Society until March, 1920. At that time the Children's Aid Society decided

CHART OF PRESENT ORGANIZATION OF  
JUVENILE COURT, TORONTO.



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that their efforts should be confined to their work of caring for dependent children and should not include the care of delinquent children. This work was then taken over by the city. As the city had not evolved any policy for the running of the Detention Home, it was placed, temporarily, under the dual management of the Property Department and the Social Service Commission, where it has since remained. Believing that the policy of divided management is not in the best interests of the work being done for juvenile delinquents,

**The Bureau recommends that the Detention Home be placed under the jurisdiction of the Judge of the Juvenile Court.**

This policy would make for the best administration, and is the recognized practice in practically every city where a publicly-supported detention home is part of the Court machinery.

The present building, which is rented for \$45.00 per month, is most undesirably located to carry out the work for which it is maintained, being in a congested, down-town district, without any adequate yard or playground facilities. The building itself, while kept in a cleanly condition, depends to a large extent on artificial lighting, the whole atmosphere being drab and somewhat prisonlike. The boys' day quarters, which adjoin the kitchen, particularly are very bare and unattractive, the furniture consisting of some benches and tables. There is practically no provision, outside of checkers and dominoes, for keeping the children occupied during their residence in the Home.

**In this connection, the Bureau would raise the point whether or not the Board of Education might be asked to co-operate by supplying a teacher for the instruction of the children in the Home.**

This is the practice in many large cities, e.g., Winnipeg, Vancouver, Detroit, Pittsburg, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Denver and San Francisco.

The sleeping quarters occupy part of the second and the whole of the third storeys, consisting of four rooms in all, each with four or six beds. The bed-rooms are crowded and, although clean, are as unattractive as the day quarters. There is no special provision for the segregation of the different types of delinquents, with the result that children charged only with minor offences, such as truancy, are brought in close contact with boys sometimes mentally sub-normal and frequently guilty of vicious practices.

The house has accommodation for about 25 children, although there are seldom this number in residence at any one time, and is used entirely for the boys, while the girls are at present sent to St. Faith's Home.



The Bureau recommends that the use of the present Detention Home be discontinued at once and that suitable quarters be found in another section of the city, providing accommodation for both boys and girls, and including:

1. Adequate day quarters and playground facilities;
2. Facilities for segregating the various types of children, particularly the feeble-minded;
3. Study rooms.

Also, that the various women's organizations and the Art Department of the Board of Education be asked to co-operate in making the new quarters homelike.

And further, that, for psychological reasons, the name "Detention Home" be discontinued and "Juvenile Hall", or some other name not suggestive of imprisonment, substituted.

In such a Home, it would be the policy of the Court to discover the ability, as well as the disability, of the child as an aid to the Court in giving vocational guidance.

Chart II, which follows, outlines the organization of the Juvenile Court as it would stand, with the Detention Home placed under its jurisdiction.

## **PERSONNEL OF THE DETENTION HOME STAFF.**

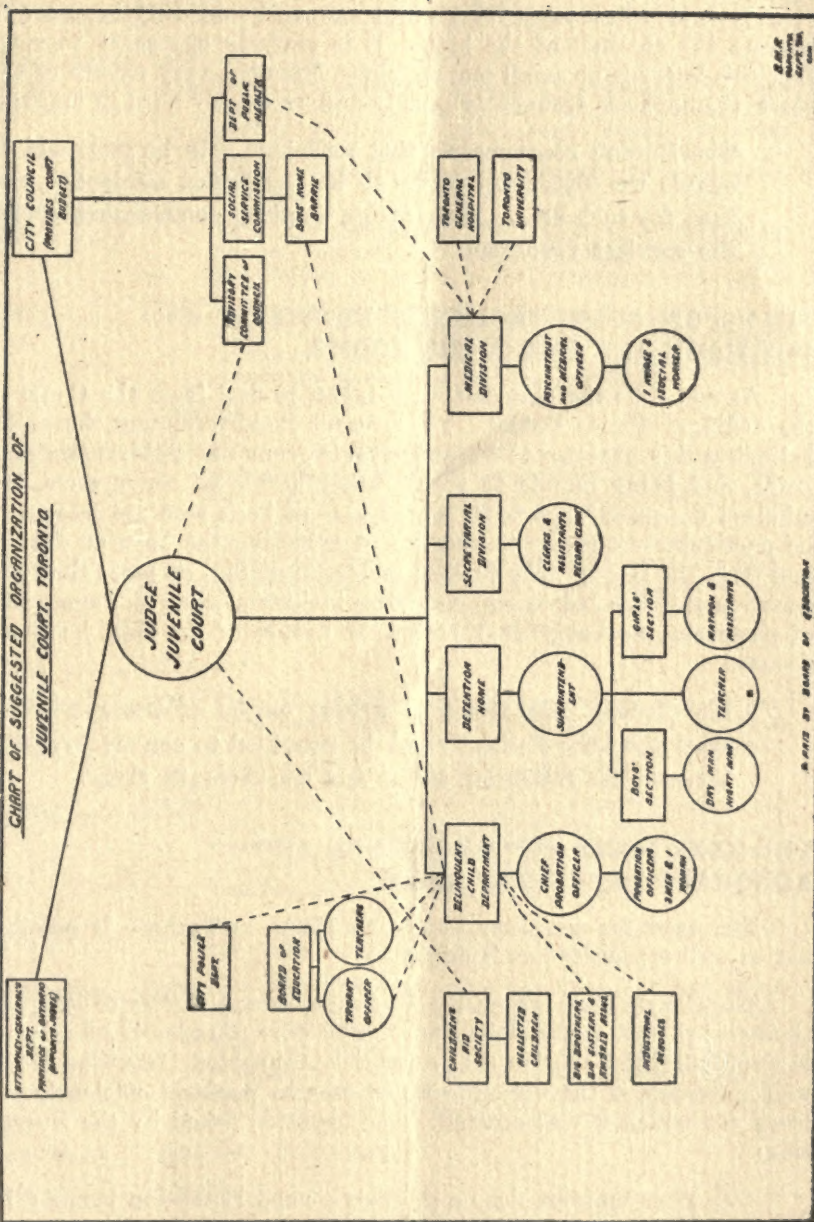
The Home is under the supervision of a man and his wife, who act as Superintendent and Matron, respectively. They have, as assistants, a day man and a night man. There is no domestic help, the house-work being done by the matron, with the exception of some of the cleaning work, which is done by the bigger boys. At the present time, the day man, in addition to his duties of keeping the boys under control during the necessary absences of the Superintendent and assisting him generally, is doing practically all the cooking. The Bureau is of the opinion that, considering the present handicaps, the work of the staff is well done.

The Superintendent and his wife, who have their living quarters in the Home, are paid \$1,200 and \$480, respectively. The day man is paid \$840, and the night man \$720, neither living on the premises. This is a total pay-roll of \$3,240 per annum.

The Bureau understands that it has lately been recommended that the services of the night man and the day man be dispensed with, and that one man be engaged to perform the services of both, at the rate of \$20.00 per week. This would evidently mean a 24-hour



CHART OF SUGGESTED ORGANIZATION OF  
JUVENILE COURT, TORONTO



day, since a large number of the children are brought in during the night hours and must be given immediate attention, such as a bath, etc. It is also necessary for a night man to be on duty in order to oversee the conduct of the boys. It is scarcely necessary to state that this latter is no small matter, since, from the very nature of the cases, the boys are frequently unruly and extremely hard to manage.

**The Bureau recommends that sufficient help be provided to enable the Detention Home to be conducted efficiently, and that, for such help, remuneration be given commensurate with the services rendered.**

### **TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES BETWEEN THE HOME AND THE COURT ROOMS.**

At one time the children were taken to and from the Court in the ordinary Police Patrol. The present Superintendent, however, believing this practice to be undesirable from the children's standpoint, and being unable to secure other means of conveyance, has adopted the practice (except in the case of boys who are known to be particularly difficult to handle) of escorting the boys on foot to and from the Home. The Bureau understands that on more than one occasion this has led to embarrassing incidents when the sympathy of passersby, probably unaware of the nature of the case, has been aroused.

**The Bureau suggests that proper means of transportation, other than the Police Patrol, be provided to convey juveniles between the Detention Home and the Juvenile Court.**

### **THE NEED FOR A WELL-EQUIPPED AND ADEQUATE DETENTION HOME.**

The need for a proper Detention Home in Toronto is possibly not as well recognized as it might be.

The Courts from which the Bureau received replies to its questionnaire regarding Juvenile Court work were practically unanimous in expressing the opinion that a publicly-supported Detention Home was necessary if the Juvenile Court was to perform efficiently the work for which it was created. The question asked by the Bureau was:

**"In your opinion, does a publicly-owned Detention Home fill a want which cannot be supplied by private detention homes, such as those under the direction of Children's Societies, etc., or the Industrial Schools?"**



The following is a resumé of the replies received :

City	No. of Cases Handled	Reply
Buffalo .....	1,127	Yes.
Calgary .....	201	Yes. The matter of providing a detention home has been under consideration here for some time. The need for such an institution seems urgent. The only advantage of not having one is that it forces the fullest utilization of all probationary or preventable measures.
Denver .....		Yes. We feel that it fills a want not supplied by private institutions. Keeps defective children for observation, runaways, or for rearrangement of home.
Detroit .....	2,126	It is my opinion that the detention home fills a want which cannot be supplied by private agencies. Except in rare cases, only children charged with acts of delinquency are admitted to the detention home.
Halifax .....	238	Yes.
Minneapolis ....	1,011	I do not think it would be practicable to secure this sort of service from private agencies in this city. We have conducted such a place for boys for eleven years, and girls, three years. The boys' is a farm of 160 acres, eleven miles from city; girls', on outskirts of town. Its chief purpose is for correctional education of delinquents, in the hope of thus saving them from long detention in state institutions. We have succeeded in a large majority of cases.
Montreal .....	1,716	Yes.
Newark .....	1,261	Yes. We also find it a great advantage to have parental home under same roof as court. Gives officers opportunity to come into close contact with child before hearing. Very convenient also.
Pittsburg .....	1,726	We prefer our present system of having everything under the direct supervision of the court. Are now using four residences (44 rooms) that were on some property purchased recently. Intend building when conditions become more nearly normal.
St. Paul .....	578	Yes. Children's Aid Societies need to be paid and do not wish to take delinquent children.
San Francisco..	1,283	Yes. Our Detention Home does fill a need that is not filled and may not at this time be filled by the combined efforts of all the child-caring agencies of the city, with whom we are on the most cordial level of co-operation. Our detention home is the centre of study for a particular group who require complete mental, medical and educational study.
Vancouver .....	238	Yes. Undoubtedly.
Winnipeg .....	1,130	Yes.
Boston	Replied: "We have no Detention Home. . . . Children are frequently taken to a private family, where the home has been investigated and selected for the purpose of receiving children for temporary care."	

In Toronto, in the first six months of 1920, there were 1,092 cases handled by the Juvenile Court, of which 333 were "occurrences" or cases settled without formal trial.

So many factors enter into the effectiveness of Juvenile Court work that it is impossible to state definitely that any one produces a specific result. Nevertheless Table I, which follows, would seem to indicate that where there is a good Detention Home, there is a diminution in the number of cases which become "repeaters". For instance, in Seattle, where the Detention Home is admittedly of the first grade, 72.1% of the total number of cases appeared in Court only once, with, therefore, only 27.9% repeaters. Similarly, in Minneapolis, there were 73.95% of first-time offenders, and only 26.05% repeaters. In Philadelphia, on the other hand, where the Detention Home is inadequate and overcrowded, the percentage appearing in Court only once was 60.33%, with 39.67% repeaters.

**TABLE I.**

**Showing Number of Times Children Arraigned in Court**

CITY	Is there a Detention Home?	Total No. Children in Court	1st Time		2nd Time		3 Times or More	
			Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Buffalo	Yes	986	662	67.14 %	165	16.73 %	159	16.13 %
Pittsburg	Yes—but poor	1,311	863	65.83 %	293	22.35 %	155	11.82 %
Seattle	Yes—good	897	647	72.1 %	155	17.3 %	95	10.6 %
New York	*	13,627	11,316	83.04 %	1,718	12.61 %	593	4.35 %
Philadelphia	Yes—but not good	9,859	5,948	60.33 %	2,562	25.99 %	1,349	13.68 %
Minneapolis	Yes—good	668	494	73.95 %	114	17.07 %	60	8.98 %
Winnipeg	Yes	865	587	67.86 %	278	.....		32.14 %

\*Work done by Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Similar information for Toronto is not available, since the records of the Juvenile Court for the year 1919 have not been analyzed either by the Court or the Bureau. The information is on file, but the Bureau felt that no tabulation could be made without the expenditure of an amount of time which would probably be out of all proportion to the results obtained.

If a Detention Home aids in the constructive correctional work which is done among the children passing through the Juvenile



Court (and the above opinions and figures seem to support this view), and thus keeps the children from becoming a social burden on the community, Toronto cannot afford to delay longer in obtaining a Detention Home which will meet the needs of the Court in an adequate manner. Toronto now spends over \$1,500,000 a year on the Police Department. Would it not be well worth while to increase the present expenditure on correctional work among delinquent children if this would, in the future, lessen the burden thrown upon the Police Department and society generally?

## **RECORDING AND REPORTING.**

A file is kept of the history of each case handled by the Court, including the medical, mental and social reports mentioned previously. These are cross-indexed and are very complete.

Since the beginning of this year, these records have been analyzed month by month and a tabulation given to the Judge and the Advisory Committee of Council.

In 1912 an Annual Report was issued, but since that time no further report has been published. The Bureau understands that the Judge of the Court has in mind the issuing of a report for the current year.

**The Bureau strongly recommends that such a report be issued annually, and that it include also a record of the work done by the Detention Home.**

At the present time, when a child enters the Detention Home, a short history of his case is taken: Name, address, for what committed, etc. Owing to the dual management under which the Detention Home is operating, the co-operation between the Court and the Home is not as complete as it might be.

**The Bureau recommends that if, and when, the Detention Home is placed under the sole jurisdiction of the Judge, a duplicate record of the child's case be kept in the Home in order that the Superintendent may be fully advised of the circumstances surrounding each case, to assist him in a proper understanding of it.**

**The Bureau also recommends that reports on the children, based on observation of their conduct while in detention, be given by the Superintendent of the Home to the Judge before final disposition of the various cases.**

Per capita and per diem costs of operation of the Home are now kept by the Social Service Commission.



The Bureau recommends that in the event of the Home being placed under the jurisdiction of the Judge, these costs be kept at the Home, the appropriation accounts, of course, being kept in the City Treasurer's Department.

### **REQUIRED LEGISLATION.**

On June 7th, 1920, the City Council adopted the report of the Juvenile Court Special Committee, embodying the Judge's suggestion that the age limit of children coming under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court be extended to include those under 18 years of age, and recommended that the City Solicitor be authorized to memorialize the Dominion Government to amend Section 2, Sub-Section (a), of the Delinquent Children Act by substituting the age 18 in lieu of 16.

The Bureau is entirely in sympathy with this recommendation and further points out that in several of the existing Juvenile Courts on this continent, the Court has jurisdiction over all those under the age of twenty-one years.

### **THE PROBLEM OF THE FEEBLE-MINDED.**

While the Bureau has not yet completed its analysis of the reports on the mental condition of the children coming before the Court, in order to find the definite relation between the feeble-minded problem and that of juvenile delinquency in Toronto, it is probable that Toronto differs little from other cities in this respect. In Philadelphia, for instance, the feeble-minded and borderline cases formed 11% of the cases of delinquent children, although the number of the feeble-minded children in the whole school population was estimated as being between  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 2%.

Having in mind the seriousness of this problem, the Bureau recommends that the necessity for taking effective steps to solve the problem of the feeble-minded again be brought to the attention of the Provincial Government.

### **A STEP FOR THE FUTURE.**

The ideal Juvenile Court is one in which all the various branches of the organization are housed in one building, tending to effectiveness of administration.

If the financial condition of the city permits, the City Council should, as soon as possible, evolve a policy and take the necessary steps to establish a new building, housing all departments of the Juvenile Court, including adequate detention quarters for boys and girls.





Toronto Family Court